

# CONNECTIONS INC

Employee & Family Solutions | Employee Assistance Programs

Vol. 23 #2

## A Message from Matt

Come Together... Maybe the Beatles had it right? I attended a training session with strangers and as an icebreaker, three questions were asked.

1. Where did you grow up?
2. How many siblings and where did you fall in the birth order?
3. What was an important or unique challenge of your childhood?



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It was effective. There were no power plays, no politics, just other humans with their own experiences. We were all similar, each of us was born, had a childhood, and faced challenges. By focusing on our similarities, we were able to come together.

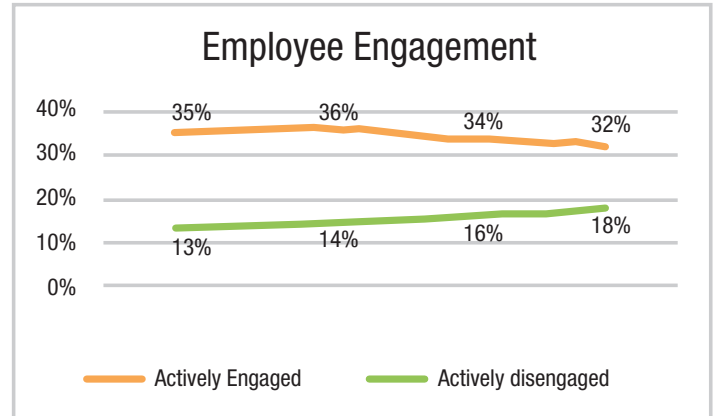
*"I am not a product of my circumstances. I am a product of my decisions."*  
-Stephen Covey



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## Increase Engagement, Build Trust

After trending up in recent years, employee engagement in the U.S. saw its first annual decline in 2021 and this pattern continued into 2022.



The engagement elements that declined the most from the pre-pandemic record-high engagement ratio in 2019 to 2022 were:

- clarity of expectations
- connection to the mission or purpose of the company
- opportunities to learn and grow
- opportunities to do what employees do best
- feeling cared about at work

The good news is this: While only 32% of U.S. employees overall were engaged in 2022, there are organizations that have more than doubled this percentage. How? They maintained this level of engagement by using their organizational culture and values to guide business decisions, embracing flexible and hybrid work while maintaining strong connections between managers and employees -- keeping performance, collaboration, employee wellbeing, and the customer at the center of how work gets done. Focus on clarifying expectations: The most concerning decline has been in the lack of clear expectations for employees. A lack of role clarity makes all other engagement elements less impactful -- employees cannot perform at a high level when they are confused as to what they are supposed to do. Hold one meaningful conversation per week with each employee: 15 to 30 minutes, about goals, customers, well-being, and recognition. This is the activity that prevents employees from feeling disconnected from the organization. Gallup finds this single habit develops high-performance relationships more than any other single leadership activity, bringing clarity and purpose to work.

[U.S. Employee Engagement Needs a Rebound in 2023 \(gallup.com\)](https://www.gallup.com/enhanced/workplace/2022/01/27/u-s-employee-engagement-needs-a-rebound-in-2023.aspx)

**Connections Inc. Employee Assistance Program's** mission is to provide holistic assistance products and services that support optimum productivity, team work and healthy community in the workplace.

Connections Inc. Employee Assistance Program mission statement since 1988

# NOTEWORTHY

## 90% OF U.S. DESK/OFFICE JOB

**EMPLOYEES** are saying they don't want the old workplace and commute to return. The post-Covid 'work at home mentality' is here! The 'gig worker' model is based on the one-time projects or 'gigs' completed. Team relationships & dialogue, generated creativity doesn't merit a listing on these agendas. Teaming: it is an Immediate Leadership Challenge The loyal and creative **EMPLOYEE TEAM** and **EMPLOYEE/CUSTOMER**

**TEAMS** meet essential social/achievement needs for employees while powerfully impacting corporate success. Management teams must maintain customer commitment by pouring new energy into creating a culture of dedicated employees who build and strengthen relationships with those customers!!! Simply put, your employees and your customers know each other. Many are friends. How will you build on that?



<https://www.gallup.com/workplace/229424/employee-engagement.asp>

## Maynard's Corner

An employer recently said, "we can not hire employees, so we need to take care of the employees we have". That employer is a very active user of Connections Inc. And they recognize that Connections Inc. EAP is a valuable retention tool.

We would be happy to provide you with a no-obligation Proposal of Services to show

you just how economical a program can be that is very highly valued by your employees.

Please contact me for more information.

After all, we are here to help!



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## ADDICTION MYTHS DEBUNKED: HOW NOT TO THINK

Dr. H. J. Rankin clinical psychologist specializing in addiction dynamics notes that it is a MYTH that 'making a decision to quit a habit, any habit, you can stop your behavior.' When you perform a behavior repeatedly over a long period of time – many years – the underlying neural synapse patterns in the brain are shaped. Key points...

1. You are very unlikely to go from constant use to no use in one go.
2. Focus on the long term and, measure progress in terms of relative, not absolute, success.
3. The key? Break the association between the habit's cues and the indulgent behavior.
4. The best growth opportunities come when in a tempting situation.
5. The subconscious processes in the brain are more important/powerful than conscious thinking.
6. Yes, this is about developing not a magic instant portion of self-control, despite some claims to change behavior without building control over impulses.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/how-not-to-think/202302/an-addiction-myth-that-needs-to-be-revisited>

**NEXT ISSUE:** Cannabis at Work

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